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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM Frontline STATION WETA-TV
PBS Network

DATE November 13, 1984 9:00 P.M. CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT Search For Peace

ANNOUNCER: Tonight, this man, an Arab; this man, an Israeli, take their search for peace to America.

MORDECAI BARON: [Unintelligible].

MOHAMMED MILHEM: I'm not going to change the world, but I can speak, and I can speak with a Palestinian friend and show that a dialogue is possible.

ANNOUNCER: Can two enemies learn to trust each other? Tonight on Frontline, the story of the Arab and the Israeli.

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JUDY WOODRUFF: What does it take for two enemies to overcome their fears, bitterness and distrust, to make peace? that's the theme of our story tonight. Two men recently came to the United States on a speaking tour, one an Israeli, the other a Palestinian Arab. Their people have fought each other in four wars, but they came here, co-sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee and a group called New Jewish Agenda, to begin what they call a dialogue for peace, to understand each other and their dilemma: Can Arabs and Israelis ever live in peace?

When the United Nations voted to create a Jewish homeland in 1947, the U.N. said this area, which was known as Palestine, should be partitioned into two states, one Jewish, one Arab. The Arab part included the West Bank of the Jordan River. But the West Bank was annexed by Jordan, and then, in 1967, seized by Israel in the Six Day War. Ever since, close to a million Palestinian Arabs there have been under Israeli military occupation.

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This small piece of earth, the West Bank, half the size of Connecticut, is a key to peace in the Middle East. Will it be given back to Jordan? Will it be part of Israel? Or could it become a separate Palestinian state next to Israel?

Tonight the story of a Palestinian from the West Bank and an Israeli journeying from city to city in America, speaking before Jewish and Arab-American audiences, attempting to trust and understand each other.

Our program, produced by Steve York, is called "The Arab and the Israeli."

MILHEM: Peace lives here and here. Peace is not borders. The secure borders should be in the heads of the Israelis. It's never too late for us.

NARRATOR: Mohammed Milhem (?), Palestinian. Elected mayor of his hometown on the West Bank, he was expelled by Israeli military authorities.

MAN: You have to remember that from the Israeli perspective, they are very suspicious of the Palestinian, generally, and certainly of the PLO. Therefore, it's important...

NARRATOR: Mordecai Baron (?), Israeli, career Army officer in the Israeli Defense Forces, once a senior aide to General Moshe Dayan. He is an historian by profession and a leader in the Peace Now movement in Israel.

Baron, the Israeli, and Milhem, the Palestinian. They came to the United States in the spring of 1984 to talk with Americans and to talk to each other.

BARON: Both sides have a growing understanding of one thing: that the era of violence in the Middle East must be over, that no sides can gain anything out of using force.

[Chants]

NARRATOR: ...the very idea of talking to each other sparked protests.

BARON: We are doing something which is almost impossible. We belong to two camps that have been in a bitter strife for the last 60 years. Mr. Milhem is 54 years. I'm his senior. I'm 55. And almost like prisoners, we are bound to each -- to listen to each other. We are bound to sometimes be shocked by what the other says. We are bound to be revolted by what the other says. And yet we are chained to each other by one

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important chain, and this is our deep conviction and feeling that we have to make our dent, our contribution to end this strife, to contain it, to get out of it.

[Applause]

NARRATOR: Seattle. At the University of Washington, almost half the audience was Arab-American. And Mohammed Milhem knew he would be criticized for appearing with an Israeli.

MILHEM: Mordecai served in the Israeli armed forces ever since he was 17 and he fought against the Palestinians and the Arabs. And here I'm sitting with him. You know why? Because I felt, as a Palestinian, that not only Mordecai, but thousands and thousands of Israelis have come to realize and to discover the fact that they are in the Middle East, they are in the middle of Arabs and Palestinians; and that if they want security and peace, they will have to come to an understanding with that flood of people there, one way or another.

That's why the forces of peace in Israel have -- are growing. We here, we should encourage them to grow more. And we Palestinians should encourage them to grow more.

TRANSLATOR: When we see Israelis with blue eyes, blonde hair, and M-16 rifles in our land, peace, he asks? I can't accept that.

Milhem asks him where he's from. He tells Milhem he's never seen a speck of his homeland, Palestine, but he's ready to die for Palestine.

Milhem replies, "You have to understand."

"Wait a minute. I'm talking about reality. When we have our state, no one will argue with us, not even the Americans, not the Arabs, not the Russians."

BARON: The [unintelligible] of violence was begun by the Palestinian side. No doubt about it. Violence...

WOMAN: You call it violence or defense?

BARON: Oh, you call it defense, I call it violence. That's a matter of words.

MAN: Originally, where do you come from?

BARON: From Palestine, the...

MAN: No, no. Your father.

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BARON: You asked me where I come from.

MAN: No, where your father comes from.

BARON: You make it a second question.

MAN: No, the last question I asked. Where your father come from?

BARON: My father comes from Poland and my mother from Germany.

MAN: Okay. That means will never be peace in Palestine until when you live in Poland. Because the time you [unintelligible] in Palestine and I born in a camp, that's nonsense. My generation in Palestine and you live in my fatherland, my generation learn, and you tell me about peace? Where it comes from, the peace? From which side, from which corner?

[Confusion of voices]

BARON: I understand what you're saying. But I want to tell you that what you are saying means that we have to decide who is right with the force of guns. You want to have war?

MAN: Guns, blood, I don't care, as far...

BARON: Okay. Let's fight. Okay. I'm ready. I'm ready to fight.

MAN: It's not me. It's my fifth generation now forward.

BARON: Whatever you say, I will answer you. My answer is, does it mean you want another war?

MAN: You took over my land and you're talking about peace. It's not make sense. It never be sense.

NARRATOR: Mordecai Baron was born in Palestine 20 years before the State of Israel existed. His parents had come to these shores in 1924 with the early Zionist immigrants and settled in the citrus orchard region near Tel Aviv. For a time, the Jewish immigrants lived in relative peace with the Arabs. But when he was 18, Baron and the Jews of Palestine were facing their first war. His army superiors quickly recognized his abilities and he was hand-picked as senior aide to General Moshe Dayan in 1956. At the age of 35, he was promoted to full colonel, and then named chief education officer, a key job he held until his retirement in 1968. He went to work with the

Zionist Youth Movement and he taught history at Hebrew University in the '70s.

After Israel's spectacular victory in the Six Day War, he saw an opportunity for peace.

"There will be no solution without the Palestinians," he tells a group at a kibbutz."

The future of the West Bank is hotly debated in Israel. Half the population wants to keep it. The other half would trade some or most of the land for peace. Baron, as part of the Peace Now movement, would go further than most Israelis to make a deal for peace. And privately, Baron is one of the few willing to consider an independent Palestinian state.

In Jerusalem, a Friday evening sabbath dinner. The Baron family is traditional, but not typical. His two eldest daughters are married and live nearby. One son-in-law is a Palestinian. The Barons consider themselves ardent Zionists committed to building the Jewish state.

BARON: I'm not a disloyal Israeli. I'm a very loyal Israeli who for years was doing his job in defending his cause by talking to audiences [unintelligible], among others, to show them how right we were and how wrong the other side was. And [unintelligible] you have to talk in a manner in which right and wrong become irrelevant. What is relevant is how can we make ourselves live with each other beyond right and wrong. And this is a transformation in the mind of people.

I have on my tongue a wealth of arguments against the Palestinians. And occasionally, even in this trip, I use them. But [unintelligible] it's wrong to do that. I mean that's the thing you ought to do now. What you ought to do now is not to convince yourself or the audience that you were right and they were wrong. The hell with that. You have to find [unintelligible] which the other side will be able to live with and be with you in your great attempt to make peace.

RABBI SANFORD RAGINS: I'm Rabbi Sanford Ragins (?). And together with my colleague Rabbi Leonard Berman, I welcome you here...

NARRATOR: California, the fifth day of their tour in the United States. Baron and Milhem appeared in a Reform Synagogue in the Belair section of Beverly Hills.

WOMAN: Please, a warm welcome to Mohammed Milhem.

[Applause and boos]

MILHEM: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

[Shouts]

NARRATOR: A handful of hecklers from the militant Jewish Defense League denounced Baron as a traitor and protested Milhem's presence as a desecration of the synagogue.

WOMAN: If you would like to take your questions or statements and put them on paper, they will be read. However, if you continue these outbursts, you will be escorted out of here. Understand?

[Applause and boos]

MILHEM: This is not the first time I...

MAN: It won't be the last time, either.

MILHEM: This is not the first time I've visited synagogue and address a Jewish audience. Several times I had the privilege to address Jewish audience, both in the occupied territories and...

[Shouts]

MILHEM: Whether it is liberated or occupied, it is some land somewhere. But I want to be honest with you all and tell you you can shout, you can shout and make me unable to speak, but this solves no problem. This solves no problem.

[Applause]

MILHEM: Other Palestinians may shout and not let Mordecai speak, and also it solves no problem.

[Applause]

MILHEM: Back there in the Middle East, there are people, there are human beings. You have 150 million Arabs. Some of them are Christians, some of them are Muslims. And this is a reality. In Israel there are about 3 1/2 million Israelis. They are Jews. And this is also a reality.

If you want to help your people, if you want to help the state you believe in, you should listen to me. You cannot escape from me. I cannot escape from you. We'll have to listen to each other.

[Applause]

NARRATOR: Milhem was expelled by Israeli military authorities from the town where he was mayor in May of 1980. He was deported along with the mayor and a religious leader of a neighboring town a few hours after five Israeli settlers had been killed there. Ten days after his expulsion, Milhem brought his case to the United Nations.

MILHEM: Our problem is a problem...

NARRATOR: Three times in the next six months, the Security Council unanimously passed resolutions calling upon Israel to let him go back home. The United States abstained in the voting, but openly criticized Israel for its actions. Israel claimed Milhem and the others had incited the violence. Most of the Israeli press editorialized against the government, saying there was no connection between the mayors and the killings. Within weeks, the killer was caught and convicted.

In December, the Israeli government ignored a recommendation from the Israeli Supreme Court to allow the mayors to return home.

In the months following, Milhem made several angry speeches, including a call for action against what he called Zionist Naziism.

MILHEM: To be expelled, one to lose their right to going back home, everybody anywhere in the world would feel deep hatred and hostility towards those who expelled him, those who have denied him the right of being [unintelligible].

NARRATOR: Since his expulsion, he has lived in Amman, capital of Jordan, in a rented apartment. From here, his hometown is just over an hour's drive to the west.

Originally a Roman town. Al-Hou (?) is ten miles south of Bethlehem in the West Bank. Arab farms cover the hills of this land. But since the 1967 war, more and more has been claimed by Israel for Jewish settlements.

Four years after his expulsion, the 25,000 people of Al-Hou still consider Milhem their mayor. His house and vineyard are just off the main road. His 95-year-old father lives next door. Milhem's grandchildren live here. His son-in-law, a doctor, tends Milhem's vines in his spare time.

MILHEM: There's only one thing I aspire to, I long for, which is to go back home and sit there and work honestly in my vineyard. This is what the Palestinians want. This is what the Israelis want. This is what anybody of you in San Francisco wants, you see, want to live in peace.

NARRATOR: They spoke before the Commonwealth Club of California, a public affairs forum whose membership is by invitation. It includes retired Foreign Service officers, scholars, journalists, and writers.

MILHEM: There are bad Palestinians, true. But the majority are good Palestinians. They want peace. They think from peace. The ghost of war hangs over every house, you see, wherever. Go to Israel also. Their sons are being killed day and night, you see. I received a letter from a soldier fighting in Lebanon. His name is Goodman. And he told me he came upon a Palestinian killed, 13 years old. He had a machine gun in the right hand and a mathematics book in the left hand. And he told me that he started crying, he started crying. And the next day he received a bullet in his leg and it was paralyzed. I visited him. I wished him good recovery.

He was a soldier fighting against the Palestinians. But at last he realized the fact that this is unholy war, to kill Palestinians who learn mathematics and fight for freedom.

Thank you.

MAN: Mr. Milhem, you were expelled from Israel for inciting to violence. You called for jihad, holy war against the Jews, in a speech in Hebron, and soon thereafter several Jews were slaughtered on their way back from sabbath services.

MILHEM: Are you lecturing or asking a question?

MAN: I'm making a statement.

Are you now willing to apologize for calling for jihad, holy war, against the Jews? And are you now willing to tell the PLO to make peace with Israel and to stop terrorism and making war on Israel?

MILHEM: Is that a question or a lecture?

MAN: You were expelled for calling for a holy war against the State of Israel. Are you willing to remove that threat of holy war against Israel?

MILHEM: Are you finished now?

MAN: I will continue to direct.

MILHEM: First of all, I was not expelled from Israel. I was expelled from my town, from my hometown. That's number one. I was expelled from the town where I was born by people who have no right to expel me or who have no right to be there.

Second, I have not called for a jihad. I have not called for a jihad...

MAN: ...in 1980.

[Confusion of voices]

MILHEM: Look, very honestly, if any one of you, and if the gentleman was in my place, the mayor of Al-Hou, he would try by all means to get rid of that occupation. And supposing that I call from Al-Hou or Hebron for a jihad, and you know a jihad is a holy war. I would be calling people who are helpless, who have no weapons, who have no arms, who can do nothing.

If you are an Israeli, if you are an Israeli -- I'm pointing at the gentleman who asked me the question -- and if you like the State of Israel and if you like to maintain the security of Israel, you see, listen to me, listen to Mordecai. We are in the age where we should think and try to analyze and say, "Where is the wrong, and how can we tackle it?" very quietly, you see.

There are heart attacks nowadays. Be careful about it.

[Applause]

BARON: Let me just add one sentence. If I may paraphrase on the words used by Orwell, in the Middle East there are two types of speeches, of words. There's a war-speak and there's a peace-speak. And when you listen carefully, you know who is speaking for what.

Thank you.

NARRATOR: Studs Terkel has hosted a popular radio show in Chicago for 22 years. By now, Milhem and Baron had done more than two dozen radio and television interviews. The two men had never met before the tour. They were born 30 miles apart and they had shared a history. But each man brought his own reading of history, and each of them would find his own way of using it.

[Music]

STUDS TERKEL: Two brief fragments from two songs, each one familiar to each of my guests, one an Israeli song and one a song familiar to Palestinians.

What comes to your mind?

BARON: The Palestinian song is, in a way, more familiar to me than the Israeli song. Until 1948 we had a very intimate contact with Palestinians. We used to go to their villages, drink coffee, visit homes, meet them in the marketplace. And

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this song is a very known song among the Palestinians, and I heard it hundreds of times from Arabs in my own native village.

TERKEL: Mayor Milhem.

MILHEM: [Unintelligible] reminds me of my expulsion, you see. He says in the second verse that the Arab lovers have gone without saying good-bye, see? And that is really -- I remember when I was expelled on second day of May, 1980, I didn't say good-bye because they told my wife that I would be back in half an hour.

Anyway, the song seems to touch the very sensitive feelings of the Palestinians. That is, in 1948 and 1967, when people were forced out and families were divided, until now there have been people trying to find the members of their family. So, this song seems to touch the feelings of every Palestinian in the diaspora, in the refugee camps, and even the Arabs who have chosen to emigrate to the United States. It's more passionate.

TERKEL: You know, when Mayor Milhem mentions diaspora, refugee camps, parents unable to say good-bye to their children, does that ring a bell with you?

BARON: Yes. Much of my own culture, as a Jew, relates to wanderings, to persecution, to families disrupted. I have uncles who died in the Holocaust. I have an uncle who perished in Europe. I didn't know them.

Here you've got a person who, himself, was expelled. And we have to carry this in mind, we Jews have to carry this in mind, that our own collective memories should not blind us to know that not only doesn't it give us any permission to persecute others, but a thing that happened 30, 40, 50 years ago happened already 40 years ago and is over. By now, the problem that is confronting us is not our sufferings of the past, but rather their suffering of the present.

NARRATOR: Even on travel days, they averaged five appearances a day, often starting before breakfast and speaking until long after dinner.

WOMAN: Mr. Baron, from Israel's point of view, who do you think you should be talking to?

BARON: There's no question that the PLO, at this moment, is...

MAN: This is the first time that an Israeli and a Palestinian have...

MILHEM: If they tell me recognize the State of Israel,

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I should recognize Begin's government...

BARON: And I do agree that Israelis tend to exaggerate their sense of fear...

MAN: In the couple of weeks that you've been touring, do you believe that the Palestinians and the Israelis are going to be able to live in peace in the future as two peoples?

MILHEM: There is no problem between the Palestinian people and the Israeli people, as people. The difference mainly arises from the policymakers...

[Confusion of voices]

[Chants of protesters]

MAN: ...representing a majority of the Jewish organizations in Cleveland. And we'd like people to know that the people in there are radicals or fanatics and they do not represent the mainstream of Jewish thought.

MAN: We have to remember that the PLO were founded back in 1964, and it was explicitly and loudly and clearly was formed in order to destroy Israel.

MILHEM: What about this PLO? You people here think it is a terrorist organization. They want to throw Israel into the sea. They are killers, they are murderers. This is not true.

NARRATOR: Milhem had visited the U.S. a dozen times since his expulsion. Baron had made the trip 40 times. Until recently, each had spoken to partisan groups for his own side. Baron on behalf of the United Jewish Appeal, and Milhem to dramatize the plight of the Palestinians. This time the audiences were different. At a Chicago lunch, there were Christian clergy, half a dozen rabbis, journalists, educators, and Arab-American businessmen.

MAN: I'd like to ask Mr. Baron. Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has recently said, "We will never recognize or negotiate with the PLO." Is this official Labor Party policy? And if so, how will you in the peace camp try to change this policy? Or will you try to change this policy?

BARON: It is the policy of the Labor Party, except for the word "never." We have, even in our camp, some difficulty with the PLO, because in spite of the signals that we have heard, the signals have not been straight and clear -- not by Mr. Milhem, who said it very clearly here and before -- but for the PLO. And our problem is not only to be convinced that there are

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signals, but to convince other Israelis that what's happened is a basic transformation in the whole meaning of PLO.

MAN: I'm trying to figure out, is it really the military that's creating the problems in the West Bank, or is it the settlements? What is the role of Americans to see that some of that stops, so that there isn't the continued encroachment?

MILHEM: If you can help the peace process there, please do it. If you don't know, please keep silent. If you don't know what the issue is, what the case of Israel or the Palestinians is, if you are not well-informed, please don't do anything. It's very harmful.

Once you are well-informed, you can tell your congressmen and your candidates for the presidency, "Please speak about employment, about inflation, about corruption, about pollution. Forget about the Middle East."

BARON: If I could believe that we can do away with the [unintelligible] of the great powers in the Middle East, I would endorse what Mr. Milhem said. I can pray to God, let us solve our problems amongst ourselves and let the big powers shy away, stop the meddling in the Middle East. But that's not the case. I mean you know that the Russians are trying to meddle harder, and I think the Americans have interests and have served different purposes. I don't think we can hope for that.

MAN: What would be his assessment, Milhem's, of the proportion of Palestinians who are not just ready to reconcile, but actually would be willing to speak for peace now, like we heard some things here?

MILHEM: I want to be frank with you. I am at close relations with Chairman Arafat and the PLO. They are my sole legitimate representative. Chairman Arafat is supported by the majority of the Palestinians, inside and outside. And he is not a dreamer. No. He is realistic and he is ready and the Palestinians are ready for half the loaf, as they say, side-by-side with Israel.

Am I clear on that? A two-state solution.

Now, these people, beginning from Chairman Arafat, they have sent signals on many occasions, not signals, personal signals, no, but in the institutions of the PLO. And I remember I was surprised at one time when there was a meeting of PNC members in Amman, Jordan -- Chairman Arafat was there -- and one who I considered to be a very extremist, he told Chairman Arafat, "Mr. Chairman, if you want to accept the Reagan plan, negotiate with Israel, you want to make sure that we Palestinians are hungry. Can we get half the loaf? If we can get half the loaf,

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Mr. Chairman, go ahead."

When I heard it I said, "Is it true that this extremist should say this?"

BARON: My feeling -- and maybe I have sensitivities -- my feeling was that the overall balance of the way you present things, it's not clear what your aim is. Are you at cross-purposes with me? Are you trying to project [unintelligible] different projection in order to win the public for your agenda, your Palestinian agenda?

When you say that Arafat is all rosy and beautiful, well, I'm not with you. I say that the Israeli government is an obstacle to peace, but you should know that I also think that the PLO did not yet overcome the legacy of them being a great obstacle for peace.

So, we can do this debate. Okay. But then we'll not come with a joint purpose. We'll go on a tangent. And you have to understand that at many moments I don't feel well that I'm with you here. I feel uneasy with it. And whatever value you give to it, I may have to summarize the experience not completely as a positive. I may regret that I've done it. I'm not quite happy with the balance.

MILHEM: There is much more for the Palestinian to complain than there is for the Israeli, much more. What you care for, what you are suspicious about, the future intentions of Arabs or the Palestinians, about the security of the state, about how the state should -- what's the borders, what about Jews who will -- you speak about the future of Jerusalem, when you have sovereign overall jurisdiction. You speak about security when you have the most powerful army.

When I speak of security I speak from the point completely different, see?

So, if I want to make the Palestinian position as it is and try to draw some pity and support, it is not to have people prejudiced against Israel, to take sides with the Palestinians. You see? If you were in my place you would be doing the same things.

BARON: There is no way on earth that the Palestinians will ever give up their struggle. You can make a case against it. It doesn't help you. They feel that way. And there's no chance on earth that they will give this up. We cannot suppress a national movement. There's no way that we can do it, especially if this national movement is surrounded by so many other states and nations that are sympathizing with them.

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So, when you keep this occupation, you actually imply a continuous war.

NARRATOR: In Cleveland, Baron spoke alone. Afterwards he was accused of threatening U.S. support for Israel.

MAN: What do you want of us? Why are you here?

BARON: First of all, I think that you deserve a fair notion of what Israel is, and you don't like it. There is a so tendency among organized Jewish people to support -- the ability of American Jews to know that in Israel what I'm saying will have the sympathy of 50 percent of the people. I'm not a marginal person. Don't you deserve to hear the voice of half of the nation, who may be tomorrow in government?

MAN: I think the thing that becomes controversial is the manner in which we so frequently hear about. When a group takes out a full-page ad in the New York Times opposing a policy of the Israeli government, they're not attempting to influence the Israeli government. They're attempting to influence the American government to lean on Israel.

Look, I've been a part of the Jewish lobby for a long -- the Israeli lobby here for a long time. And I'm not as confident as you are about our power. We lose a lot of fights.

BARON: We lose fights, we win a lot. And we win the fight that the United States supports Israel to the amount of two billion dollars a year.

MAN: Yes, we have many, many friends. My concern is...

BARON: Very powerful.

MAN: My concern is that we give ammunition to those people who don't wish Israel well, the enemies of Israel, and give them the opportunity to say, "We're not anti-Israel. We're not anti-Semitic. Look what these people are saying. That's all we're doing."

NARRATOR: In two weeks on the road, they had proven that dialogue was possible, despite their serious disagreements. But after almost every speech, one or both of them was angry. And every day, one or the other talked privately about quitting the tour.

MILHEM: They're put in jail because they want security. They demolish houses because they want security. This is not you. They demolish, they expel, they expropriate because they want land without people. That is all. They want land without people. Land is more important than peace. And as long as land

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is more important than peace, then it's going to be bad for everybody.

[Applause]

BARON: The problem is that each side feels not only completely just, but also feels that he has got all the grievances against the other side, and feels so honestly.

MILHEM: They have thrown 2000 Palestinians like me, mayors and intellectuals, they have thrown out hundreds of thousands like me outside. You never knew their names. They're poor people, workers, laborers. You never heard about their names. All right. They threw us out. Where do we go?

BARON: The question is not that I'm responsible for the Palestinians. There are more problems involved, but [unintelligible] essential problems. I consider the occupation to be the most, a tremendous thing for me, as a Jew, as a Zionist. So I consider this to be a Jewish problem, although we call it often a Palestinian problem.

MILHEM: The more they harass us, the more we regroup. Don't humiliate people. Tell them it's enough.

BARON: As a background to my great eagerness to come out to the United States with Mr. Milhem and do this tour with him, I was under tremendous pressures: "Why do you do that? It's going to be negative." Like the prophet has said, it was like a fire burning in me. My wife said, "Are you sure you are doing the right thing? Aren't you afraid you may lose your stature, your fame, your prestige in Jewish circles in Israel?"

No single person can make the contribution that can lead him to say, "I did it." I'm not going to change the world. But it is incumbent upon me to at least do what I can do. I can speak, and I can speak with a Palestinian friend and show the Israelis and show the Americans and show the American Jews that a dialogue is possible, with all these differences that we fight among ourselves, but that we are united with one burning desire: to stop soon the occupation.

Thank you.

[Applause]

WOMAN: I frequently do programs both with Palestinians and Israelis. I've not had the opportunity to do both together, so frequently people will not sit around the same table. The opportunity for this interaction is unique, and I think that you must have been perhaps surprised at the reception you've received in the United States.

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BARON: In both cases, yes.

MILHEM: But we would not have been together if we didn't belong to the same camp, the camp of peace and justice.

WOMAN: Yes.

MILHEM: We would not be together. When we say...

NARRATOR: Even when speaking to their American audiences, they were talking to each other, searching for common ground, seeing the conflict from the other side, but also uncovering their differences.

MILHEM: ...Israel doesn't exist. The United Nations gave Israel...

NARRATOR: Baron said later, "I listened to Mr. Milhem with great pain."

MILHEM: But there have been racist, discriminatory practices by the government of Israel and by the extremist settlers...

WOMAN: In the West Bank, you're talking about.

MILHEM: There is lots of racism. There is lots of suppression.

BARON: You can't expect me to accept what you're saying now. I mean I think that the Palestinians have been as racist as what you think we are. The term racist doesn't apply to the situation. We are struggling between two nations. Forget about race. Israel is not a race. You look at Isreelis, you'll find Falashas with black curled hair, you'll find Israelis with blonde eyes and blue eyes. I mean the term race is a vicious term. I mean it's just calling name each other. You are a racist by saying that I am racist. But this doesn't lead us to any place. I mean if you say...

[Confusion of voices]

MILHEM: I'm not saying about you. I am saying about...

BARON: No, about this government. Neither our government is racist. This is not a correct approach.

MILHEM: The Likud government, Begin's government is a facist, racist...

BARON: No, no. You're not right. It is neither facist

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nor racist. It is suppressive of your nation. This is a national conflict between two nations in which we won. And that's why we are now suppressing you. If you would have won, you would have suppressed us.

What we have to look for is a way in which these two nations will have equality of right, and therefore would be able to live next to each other, on which basis we stand. But by calling name each other, you only deter us from believing that you have honest intentions.

MILHEM: I was not shocked at some of what I heard from Mordecai because I knew it all the time. The one who would have been shocked would have known for the first time of these Israelis and their mentality, their attitude is. So I was not one of those.

BARON: I think that he grew to believe me, and it took time for him. But he grew to believe my honesty, and he did. And my ideas [unintelligible]. I think that he also grew to believe more than he ever believed before that there is a chance that there are enough Israelis and the kind of Israelis that may end up reaching a real hand towards him.

BARON: We are experimenting in our very itinerary, the two of us. We experienced right here this evening, yesterday, the day before today in speeches around the banquet table, going in a car, fighting each other, watching each other, listening to each other, suspecting each other, and struggling internally to get rid of all those images that we imbibed in the last 55 years, of erasing features, of trying to build up new ones.

I was very impressed when I read an article that the famous British historian E.H. Carr published in the London Times at the beginning of 1942, in the middle of the worst blitz of the Germans over London, in praise of the German culture. And in his introduction he said, "One day we'll have to make peace." You never make peace with friends. You make peace with enemies. And you have within the war to preserve your ability to view your enemy as a human being, because you will have to get to the point in which you'll have to reach your hand to him and revive the ability to live with him.

WOMAN: Operator, I'd like to call the city of Ramallah, which is on the West Bank, and we go through Jerusalem. And I can give you the codes and...

NARRATOR: Detroit, April 3rd. Mohammed Milhem's father had suffered a heart attack. Milhem was called back home. Tour director Gail Pressberg began the search for a Palestinian replacement.

For Milhem, the tour was suddenly over with only half the itinerary completed.

WOMAN: He's in the hospital?

MILHEM: He should be in the hospital. I think he had once trouble with his pacemaker and they changed it.

WOMAN: We have to figure out where to go from here. Do you have some thoughts about Palestinians...

NARRATOR: With half an hour before his flight, there was only time for breakfast and farewell. Baron would have to speak alone in the next few cities. Under other circumstances, it would have been a time to summarize and reflect. But for now, they would have to reach their conclusions separately.

The tour continued. Baron was joined by a Palestinian history professor. But he was about to be challenged in another, more demanding forum back in Israel. On the evening of April 22nd, Baron arrived home. An unexpected national election had been set for late July. The ruling Likud government was in trouble.

Mordecai Baron and the Israeli peace movement had been waiting seven years for this moment. He had never been a candidate for public office. And when he was asked to run, he did not immediately accept. But friends persuaded him. By early June he was an active candidate for a seat in Israel's parliament.

"Politics is a dirty business," a soldier tells him. "But somebody has to do it."

Baron's party, the Citizens Rights Movement, had opposed Israel's invasion of Lebanon. Baron tells the soldiers, "Lebanon was a war we chose. We didn't have to do it."

A corporal says, "It's all right. American aid will solve all our problems."

But Baron warns, "They've already given us so much. They day may come when they'll stop. That's the fear. Every year two billion dollars."

"Don't tell me," the soldier says. "Tell the people who support Begin and Sharon."

Traveling through villages in Northern Israel, Baron campaigns among Israeli Arabs. There are 700,000 of them with citizenship and voting rights. Here, the issue is not the West

Bank, but local concerns: roads, schools, taxes and inflation.

But it's among the successful and educated Israelis of European dissent, the grass roots of the Labor Party, that Baron spends much of his time. Unlike the Likud, Labor has been willing to consider a deal to return the West Bank to Jordan. Baron argues that any deal has to include the Palestinians.

From the Jordanian capital, Israel's election campaign was being closely watched. Ever since his expulsion, Mohammed Milhem had known that only a Labor government would consider letting him go home to the West Bank. Labor had begun the campaign with a comfortable lead in the polls. And although the gap was narrowing, there seemed a real prospect of a more moderate government in Israel.

Since his expulsion, Milhem had become deeply involved in PLO activities. He considered himself a moderate, but the radicals in the organization rejected talk of peace with Israel, especially after the war in Lebanon. For Milhem, a Labor victory might strengthen the moderates within the PLO and buy time.

On the evening of July 23rd, in the Tel Aviv headquarters of his party, Mordecai Baron and his wife Arella waited for election returns. Political observers around the world were describing it as the most important national decision in Israel's history. By ten o'clock Baron's election was assured. But the final tabulation revealed a stalemate. A month of bargaining would be required to forge even a weak governing coalition. Israel had refused to make a decision.

Two days after the election, in Amman, Milhem's family is together for the summer. Tomorrow his wife will leave for Al-Hou to visit the rest of the family.

MILHEM: Well, all these hopes collapse, a peaceful compromise solution for peace, for stability. But still it seems there's no home. Those people who have chosen to live on our land and in our homes, it seems that there's no hope. Maybe we should find better means than this, you see. That was mine and that was Mayor [unintelligible]'s background, all the others, in their frustration, you see.

Now this will give a leeway to the extremists to say, "Haven't we told you all the time? Haven't we been telling you all the time?"

So I think everybody -- there will be now a prolonged stalemate, you see, in the politics of the Middle East.

BARON: I do believe that nations, on the whole, behave

rationally. Of course, we have many examples in history in which people destroy themselves. But I think we believe in the intelligence of the Palestinians. And I know that the Jews are a clever people, without being chauvinistic. They are people who have been trained by history. And if these two nations are rational, in the last account, any continuation of the struggle for too long -- well, we can continue for a year or two, but if we do not reach peace soon enough, it is [unintelligible] the destruction of both sides.

WOODRUFF: The efforts of this Israeli and this Palestinian wrestling with the chances for peace reflect, in a way, larger shifts on this issue in this country and in Israel. Every since Israel's costly, inconclusive invasion of Lebanon two years ago, dissent has grown within Israel over government policies concerning the West Bank and Palestinians. And in this country, within the American Jewish community, there are more voices now questioning the military and political direction of Israel. There are those who say the United States should play a more active role in the fate of the West Bank.

Israel is our number one foreign aid recipient, expected to ask for a dramatic increase in military and economic aid, four billion dollars for next year, which would not have to be repaid.

But how far can outside intervention go? In the end, it must depend on a minimum of trust between the two peoples most concerned: Arabs and Israelis.